

DEREK'S DILEMMA

A RADIO PLAY – COMEDY

By Joy Meekings

CHARACTERS

DEREK	Age 55. Decent man. Desperate for money. At the end of his tether so robs a Bank, normal Australian voice
MRS HOPKINS	Age about 70. Very attractive. Looks younger uses Botox. Loves men. Close neighbour of him and his Mother. Has known Derek all his life, well spoken voice
MAN 1	Inactive Senior, quiet voice
MAN 2	Fit and agile Senior, loud and confident voice
BANK TELLER	Adult Female, composed voice
POLICE OFFICER	Adult Male, voice of authority

SYNOPSIS

Derek's Mother has gambled away their house and money. Is robbing a Bank the only way forward? Will his neighbour Mrs Hopkins save the day, or will her rather raunchy revelations come too late?

SCENE 1

AUDIO INSIDE A BANK, PEOPLE SPEAKING VERY SOFTLY, VOICEOVER SAYING “TICKET NO. 54 TO BANK TELLER NO. 1”. LARGE DOORS OPEN, TRAFFIC NOISE, THEN DOORS CLOSE

DEREK (*shouts*) OK everyone! This is a hold up! On the floor - now!

MAN 1 Crikey not a Bank robbery!

MAN 2 Yeah and by a bloke dressed up as a Clown - whatever next?

MRS H I'm sorry, but I can't possibly get on the floor. I've got such sore knees and hips. I suffer terribly from arthritis, it's really unpleasant.

MAN 1 I'd rather not. I'd probably get down, but I wouldn't be able to get up again.

DEREK Oh for goodness sake, could you both just go and sit on a chair then!

MRS H Thank you so much.

MAN 1 Cheers Mate!

AUDIO SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS THEN CHAIRS BEING PULLED OUT

MAN 2 (*show off voice*) I can get down and get up again! Got new hips.

Marvellous! Look I'll show you!

DEREK (*says in utter frustration*) For goodness sake get up! This is not a “Gym for Geriatrics” session you know! Just go and sit over there with the other two, where I can see you. Don't try to be a Hero either. I've got a gun in my bag. I'll use it if I have to!

MAN 2 There's no need to get aggressive. Bit out of character for a clown!
(chuckles to himself).

MRS H Is that you Derek? I'd know your voice anywhere! Whatever are you doing dressed up in a silly Clown wig and red nose?

DEREK *(in disbelief)* WHO are YOU?

MRS H Its Mrs Hopkins from No 42 – I live next door to you and your Mother.

DEREK I hardly recognise you Mrs H. You look quite different from the last time I saw you. Can't quite figure out why though?

MRS H Well I've recently had some work done. Botox is simply amazing. The years just melt away!

DEREK It's certainly worked wonders for you. But why would you have to be at this Bank, on this particular day?

MRS H It's my local Bank Derek, and it's Pension Day. That's why the other Seniors are here too. Same day, every fortnight. Do our banking and get our money out.

MAN 1 Yes we do.

MAN 2 Yep, every two weeks like clockwork.

DEREK Sounds like a Pension Day Social Club! I knew I should have planned this better and really checked things out.

MRS H I just can't believe it's you. Whatever's going on? Your Mother would be so upset if she knew what you were doing.

DEREK (frustrated) I'm doing this because of her!

MRS H Why? Whatever has happened?

DEREK At 75 she decided to go to the U3A class "Computers for Beginners". She took to it like a duck to water. Got herself an iPad, then she stumbles upon online gambling.

MRS H (quizzical) Your Mother an iPad ... online gambling?

DEREK I know Mrs H it's hard to believe isn't it? But worse was to come, she became totally addicted to it!

MRS H Goodness me. How awful for you.

DEREK Then she goes to another U3A class "How to Enjoy your Retirement" and finds out she can remortgage the house. So that's gone too! Not a penny left. Nothing!

MAN 1 You hear a lot about gambling addiction these days.

DEREK But it's really bad news when it's your own Mother!

MRS H Well robbing a Bank won't help will it?

DEREK The money I get here will give me a chance for some breathing space. I need to figure out what to do next. I'm at my wit's end!

BANK TELLER Derek, you won't get any money today. While you've been talking, I've activated the security alarm, all the safety shields and doors are locked. The Police are on their way.

DEREK Nothing is going right! May as well shoot myself, but I don't even have a gun, let alone a loaded one!

MRS H Whatever have you got in that bag, if it's not a gun?

DEREK It's just a lump of wood. Can't even rob a bank! Can't kill myself! I'm totally useless! A waste of space!!

MAN 1 (*encouraging voice*) Come on Mate, buck up, there has to be a job for you somewhere that will get you back on track?

DEREK I got retrenched last year. Been trying to find work ever since. It's just so hard at 55. I only get a small allowance from Centrelink. She lost the lot!

MAN 2 How about being a Lollipop man? I hear there's a shortage of them at the moment. I reckon you'd be good at that. Steady job. I think the pay's good too. Use your clown wig, make the kids laugh? (*chuckles*)

DEREK (*voice lifts up*) I do like the sound of that! I'll check it out. Thanks. I'm actually starting to feel better!

MRS H Derek, I've just remembered something your dear departed Father told me about his blue chip shares.

DEREK (*suspiciously*) What blue chip shares?

MRS H He said he had thousands of them.

DEREK What? That's personal! Why would he tell you?

MRS H Well, we were extremely close at one time.

DEREK (quizzical) Close? Exactly how close?

MRS H Well, if you must know, we had an affair for many years.

DEREK (shocked) Good grief!

Others in the Bank say lots of oohs and ahhs, goodness me, etc

MRS H My marriage was not a good one, but I had the children to think of and mmm....well, back then you never got divorced. Your Father and I just sort of 'clicked'. He was such a lovely man.

DEREK Crikey Mrs H, this is really hard to take in! I only hope my Mother never knew about it?

MRS H Oh no, we were very discreet Derek. I'm sure she had no idea. I just recall him saying that he had inherited a vast amount of shares, and could sell them if ever times got really tough.

DEREK Amazing! The shares were never mentioned in his Will. If only I'd known about them. I'll track them down if it's the last thing I do! (pause) Just as well I saw you here today eh Mrs H? Maybe some good will come out of this awful mess after all?

AUDIO POLICE SIREN. CAR DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES.

POLICE OFFICER (shouts) Police open up!

BANK TELLER OK, please hold on, I'll release the doors for you

AUDIO SOUND OF DOORS OPENING THEN CLOSING, HEAVY FOOTSTEPS

POLICE OFFICER Well, you must be the Clown who's robbing the Bank then?

DEREK Guilty as charged, Officer.

POLICE OFFICER Hands behind your back please Sir.

AUDIO METALIC CLIC OF HANDCUFFS

POLICE OFFICER Yes I do Madam.

MRS H I've known Derek his whole life. Always such a polite little boy growing up. He was a Boy Scout. Looked so smart in his uniform. Adores animals. Loves his Mother. Never been violent. He's a really good man.

POLICE OFFICER A good man you say? Madam, good men don't attempt armed robbery. it's a serious offence!

MAN 1 That's right, he didn't scare any of us.

MAN 2 What Clown would? (*laughs*)

POLICE OFFICER Sir, I am arresting you for attempted armed robbery.

You do not have to say anything, but anything you do say will be taken down, and could be used as evidence in a Court of Law. Do you understand?

DEREK (sadly) Yes I do Officer

MRS H Excuse me again Officer, but can I have a word with Derek, on my own please?

POLICE OFFICER (frustrated) You may Madam, but make it snappy!

MRS H (loud whisper) Don't you worry about a thing Derek. I know the Police Commissioner extremely well, if you know what I mean?

DEREK (shocked) Good grief Mrs H!

MRS H (loud whisper) Once he knows I've kept all of his 'extremely explicit' love letters, then I'm certain he will feel compelled to help you. Chin up Derek! Every cloud has a silver lining!

POLICE OFFICER This way please Sir.

MRS H (shouts out) Be strong Derek, be strong!

MAN 1 (shouts out) Good luck Derek!

MAN 2 (shouts out) Keep smiling!

AUDIO **VOICEOVER SAYING "TICKET NO 54 TO BANK TELLER NO 1"**

AUDIO **Music similar to 'Jailhouse Rock'**